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ABSTRACT

Ten papers are provided on the prison education service in the United Kingdom. "Developments in Prison Service Management" (Ian Benson) describes changes in the past 5 years. "Prison Libraries" (Peter Blunt) describes the background to prison libraries and provides information on the present position. Current approaches to vocational education and training are addressed in "Prison Service Vocational Training in the 1990s" (Christine Braddock). "The Management of Regimes" (Ian Dunbar) contains the message that the prison service must have a clear vision of the need to care for, help, and influence prisoners and must translate that vision into concrete language which provides a practical tool for management purposes. "The Role and Function of the Head of Inmate Activities: A Practitioner's Approach" (Alison Gomme) describes the Fresh Start model. "Conditions of Service for Staff in Further Education" (David Marston) considers that 1-2% of the further education work force are correctional educators. "Officer-Led Pre-Release Training" (Stephen Pryor) explains the goals of helping inmates cope with imprisonment and return successfully to the community. "Implications and Opportunities of the Education Reform Act for Prison Education" are considered by Paul Ripley. "The Management of Stress" (Anna Stiling) focuses on a concern of corrections officers. The final paper examines the "Development of National Vocational Qualifications in the Prison Service" (Neil Tattersall). (YLB)

Developments in Prison Service Education and Training

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Coombe Lodge Report

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COOMBE LODGE REPORT
Volume 22 Number 1

DEVELOPMENTS IN PRISON SERVICE EDUCATION AND TRAINING

By Ian Benson, Peter Blunt, Christine Braddock, Ian Dunbar, Alison Gomme, David Marston, Stephen Pryor, Paul Ripley, Anna Stiling and Neil Tattersall

3

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DEVELOPMENTS IN PRISON SERVICE EDUCATION AND TRAINING

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FOREWORD

It is nearly a decade since the Further Education Staff College published a Coombe Lodge Report on the prison education service. This collection of papers indicates that much has changed in that period.

'Fresh Start', the publication of Ian Dunbar's work **A sense of direction,** and various Home Office Circulars have engendered a new climate within prisons. That climate — as it affects the education and training of inmates — is encapsulated in the following quote from Ian Benson's paper which opens this Report:

> The primary purpose of education departments is to enable prisoners to learn effectively. Education, vocational training and libraries are resources provided for this purpose and should be managed effectively and efficiently to meet the identified needs of as many individuals as possible and agreed in a contract between tutor and students. These needs will include vocational, personal, social and general elements and resultant changes should be observable and capable of being evaluated.

This statement, produced by a small group of education officers, will probably be issued to prison establishments in mid-1990 as part of a wider initiative. The areas identified in the statement — education, vocational training and libraries — are treated in other papers in this Report.

Peter Blunt's paper on libraries describes the background to prison libraries and provides useful information on the present position. Current approaches to vocational education and training are treated by Christine Braddock ('Prison Service Vocational Training in the 1990s'), Alison Gomme ('The Role and Function of the Head of Inmate Activities'),

Stephen Pryor ('Officer-led Pre-release Training'), Neil Tattersall ('Development of National Vocational Qualifications in the Prison Service'), and Paul Ripley ('Implications and Opportunities of the Education Reform Act for Prison Education').

Ian Dunbar has contributed a paper on 'The Management of Regimes'. His message is, in essence, that 'The prison service must have a clear vision of the need to care for, to help, and if possible to influence for the better the prisoners who are sent to it. That vision must be translated into concrete language which provides a practical tool for management purposes.'

Two of the issues which all managers must face are dealt with in papers by David Marston ('Conditions of Service for Staff in Further Education') and Anna Stiling ('The Management of Stress'). These, along with many of the education and training issues treated in other papers, indicate that the problems faced by prison managers and prison education officers have much in common with those faced by further education in general. This collection of papers clearly reflects this affinity and indicates the continuing need to strengthen the relationships between penal establishments, their education departments and the further education system.

Jean Finlayson
Publications Editor
Further Education Staff College

DEVELOPMENTS IN PRISON SERVICE MANAGEMENT

Ian Benson
Chief Education Officer
Home Office Prison Service
Chief Education Officers Branch (CEOB)

A little over five years ago I was an 'outsider' to prisons in that I was employed by a local education authority. Part of my work took me into the education departments of prison service establishments and I would like to share with you (albeit in a brief and impressionistic way), my perceptions at that time.

Governors arrived and departed at two-three year intervals. They appeared to have an unfettered right to determine what sort of an institution they wished the establishment to become. Whether they succeeded in turning it into that type of institution depended to a large extent on the degree to which their 'vision' was congruent with the traditions of the establishment and the views of the less transient staff. In terms of education, it seemed to me that it was difficult for a new governor radically to enhance its position but quite easy for a new governor to undermine it. There was no over-arching sense of purpose and without this it was difficult for governors to be held accountable.

The effective running of establishments depended on a large amount of overtime and a great deal of educational provision depended upon prison officers' willingness to undertake this voluntary activity. As a result there were frequent closures — often at short notice. No one in the prison service knew the extent of such closures and, as a result, it was easy to assume that no one cared. This description of 'random *ad hoc*ery' does not exaggerate the position.

Circular Instruction 55/84 was the first blast of the trumpet which heralded the determination of the prison service to tackle long neglected management issues. At the risk of over-simplification, this initiative gave a clear statement concerning the function of establishments: it established clear lines of accountability from governor to regional director. It also established the context within which the governor and regional director could agree a 'contract' to include not only inputs — such as resources — but also outputs — such as regime activities.

This initiative was underpinned by the slow development of management information systems which enabled governors and regional directors to monitor performance. 'Fresh Start' gave local management the power to deploy staff more effectively. It took away the service's dependency upon prison officer overtime and it instituted a line of intermediate managers — the most significant for our purposes being the Head of Inmate Activities.

These inter-related developments have been pursued with consistency and determination. More recently (in November 1988) the Prisons Board issued its statement of purpose:

> Her Majesty's Prison Service serves the public by keeping in custody those committed by the Courts. Our duty is to look after them with humanity and to help them lead law abiding and useful lives in custody and after release.

Ian Dunbar's work, **A sense of direction** (1985), had an influence on this development. His notion of 'Dynamic Security' based on individualism, relationships and activity has implications for the work of education departments. Work is now in hand to enhance the quality of the contract between the governor and the regional director and this includes the devising of corporate objectives. Education officers should contribute to discussion on these objectives and should then ensure that the Departmental Statement of Aims and Objectives is congruent with the wider purposes of the institution.

In this brief description of recent developments I am not pretending that all is perfection. Given the nature and scope of the desired changes and the other difficulties which the prison service faces, it would be unrealistic to expect perfection in a relatively short time. But a sense of purpose and order is coming and is replacing the 'random *ad hoc*ery' of the past.

In concluding this description of recent developments I offer two observations. The first is that such changes often appear mechanistic — more concerned with how things are done than what is done and the reasons for doing them. Although it may appear otherwise, the prison service does not believe these changes to be an end in themselves. Rather, they are seen as being a **means** to enable the service to operate more efficiently and effectively in discharging its new found sense of purpose. Secondly, these developments in management are not confined to the prison service. All public services — not least education services in the community — are now far more conscious of the need to be clear about purpose, to identify accountability at every level, and to monitor achievements.

STRUCTURE AND PURPOSE

In addition to the substantial changes described above, the prison service has recently begun to review its organisational structure at above establishment level. The proposed new structure aims to tidy existing anomalies by creating a Director of Inmate Programmes.

There is, at present, a difference between the policy divisions and the operational divisions of the prison service. The operational head of the service is the deputy director general and the four regional directors are accountable to him. The review report aimed to create a greater fusion between operational and policy issues by creating a new structure of 14 area managers and abolishing the present regional structure.

There are, at present, six principal education officers — four of whom are responsible for educational provision within a region and are supported by a senior education officer. Although the remaining two principal education officers are each able to offer some regional support to two of their colleagues, their main function is concerned with national co-ordination and policy development. Some interchange is possible and some of the regionally based principal education officers have national policy responsibilities. For example, Denys Edwards has responsibility for information technology and Peter Blunt for libraries. The structure and deployment of CEOB staff mirrors the current organisational structure whereby we have a concern for both policy and operational issues.

It is impossible at this stage to predict the implications of the organisational review. It has been agreed that much more work will need to be done in

defining the role and function of specialists, but this will have to await decisions on the Board structure.

The purpose of CEOB can be summarised as follows:

> . . . to maintain and develop educational systems to meet the perceived learning needs of prisoners which are professionally congruent with similar facilities in the community and to plan them within the context of available resources, the purpose and policies of the prison service and the operational needs of establishments.

I would like to stress that we are not concerned only with maintenance but with 'development' and a need to ensure that our services are 'professionally congruent with similar facilities in the community'. I will return briefly to these points when I describe some current initiatives.

I believe that it is necessary for us to issue some simple statement of purpose for education departments. A national statement would then enable individual education departments to frame their own aims and objectives and contribute to the formulation of corporate objectives being devised by each establishment. Such a statement would also help those who find themselves under pressure to deploy resources to occupy inmates. Occupation and activity are healthy and good but they must be seen as beneficial by-products of our main purpose which is concerned with learning.

> The primary purpose of education departments is to enable prisoners to learn effectively. Education, vocational training and libraries are resources provided for this purpose and should be managed effectively and efficiently to meet the identified needs of as many individuals as possible and agreed in a contract between tutor and students. These needs will include vocational, personal, social and general elements and the resultant changes should be observable and capable of being evaluated.

This statement has been produced by a small group of education officers and will probably be issued to establishments in mid-1990 as part of a wider initiative. Although the first sentence may seem patently obvious, we need to remember that it is intended to offer guidance to a wider audience. The phrase 'as many individuals as possible' has been included in an attempt to counteract prevailing forces. The growth in full-time daytime education has

meant that a smaller proportion of prisoners is consuming a larger proportion of the resources available. The notion of some agreement between tutor and student simply reflects best practice in post-school education.

The categories of educational need are phrased in instrumental terms. I recognise and value, however, that the very process of involving students with the identification of need, the defining of content and methodology and the evaluation of the achievement of learning will be equally valuable to the learning outcomes. By this process we give prisoners choice; we respect and develop their individuality and we give them a realistic sense of achievement. These three elements are often lacking elsewhere in the prison regime.

CURRENT INITIATIVES

It is — and always will be — necessary to ensure that efficient use is made of all available resources. There will always be a limit to the money available for public services. If management does not exercise efficiency, fewer people gain advantage from the expenditure. The review of 'value for money' in education services carried out three years ago might have resulted in a reduction in resources for prison education. Instead it resulted in an agreement that we would be given the resources required and, in return, we would increase the outcome derived. The targets of increased student hours and of over-all average class sizes were achieved and, as a result, prison service payments to LEAs have increased as follows:

1987/88	£15.544 million
1988/89	£18.214 million
1989/90	£21.224 million

We would not have achieved this expansion if we had not proved our credibility.

The only danger in stressing the need for efficiency is that, at establishment level, some may (wrongly) believe that CEOB is only concerned with quantitative measurements and has no concern for quality. If **value** for money is to be obtained, attention to effectiveness must equal that given to efficiency. The following are among recent initiatives in this area.

1 Prison Service/LEA Working Party

There is a great deal of confusion about who is responsible for what in the delivery of education in prisons. This has always resulted in education officers having to work in an environment of some uncertainty and receiving varying levels of support. The moves to which I referred earlier, concerning greater clarity of purpose, of accountability and of monitoring, require us to clarify this area. A working party has been considering the issue and their report will probably be published in summer 1990. Its most significant recommendation is likely to be that the prison service and each LEA have a written agreement to cover a three-year period, reviewed and renewed each year. Both sides will collaborate in planning and monitoring.

2 Curriculum framework

The fact that we move prisoners between establishments requires us to ensure a degree of commonality so that continuity can take place. It is clearly ludicrous to suggest that on the one hand the curriculum has to be based on perception of individual needs and, on the other hand, that it can be determined centrally. What I am suggesting, however, is that a framework (a structure, not a stricture) be developed. We have already begun this process with local prisons working with the establishment to which inmates are sent. We will need to build onwards and outwards from this initiative.

3 Evaluation

A draft has been issued of a model to enable staff to evaluate their endeavours in a more systematic way. The draft was produced by a small group of education officers who are anxious to receive feedback so that they can refine it and issue it more widely.

4 Ancillary Support

Many education departments are desperately short of ancillary support and, as a result, a great deal of expensive and valuable teacher time is devoted to technical and clerical issues. I cannot be more specific at this time but I can offer the assurance that we are not only aware of the problem, but are discussing a

number of possible solutions with the personnel and finance divisions.

5 **Research**

Research is another function which requires central co-ordination. The prison service is currently collaborating with the Adult Literacy and Basic Skills Unit (ALBSU) in three Special Development Projects, the results of which should be available in about a year's time. Another ALBSU Project, being carried out in conjunction with the University of Nottingham, is attempting to devise a means of assessment in adult basic education which is both student-centred (and adult in orientation), and valid and reliable. Next summer will also see the completion of the joint Home Office/Arts Council Research Project on the role of the arts in prisons.

Other initiatives are our collaboration with the Further Education Staff College to provide effective management training for prison education officers, the development of IT and our response to NCVQ.

CONCLUSION

I have tried to stress three things. Firstly, the management of prisons has moved a long way in the last five years and order is now emerging out of the chaos. Secondly, the purposes of prisons and of education are congruent; there is scope for developing regimes, and education is a vital component. Thirdly, I have indicated that CEOB — in conjunction with education officers — is taking a number of initiatives to help staff take advantage of this more favourable climate.

REFERENCE

Dunbar, Ian (1985) **A sense of direction.** Home Office

PRISON LIBRARIES

Peter Blunt
Principal Education Officer
Home Office Prison Service
South West Region

The average daily population of people held in custody in England and Wales is approximately 50,000. They are held in 130 prison establishments provided and maintained by the Home Office. The establishments are unevenly distributed geographically. Library facilities are provided in every establishment by arrangement with local public libraries. In all, 52 public library authorities are involved in this service. They are reimbursed by the Home Office at a nationally applied per capita rate at a level agreed with local authority associations.

This situation has evolved over a period of a century or more, having originated from the early nineteenth century practice of affording people in custody, through the offices of chaplains, access to the Bible and other works of a religious character, which it was hoped would bring about a measure of repentance and improved behaviour. Early in the present century access to a wider range of literature became customary through purchases of books and by donations from public bodies and private individuals. Following many local initiatives in the early 1940s, local public library authorities began to make book loans available to prisoners in return for a modest capitation fee.

Legislation (the Prison Rules 1964) obliges the Prison Department to provide a library in each of its establishments.

The act of committing a person to a period of custody does not change the reading needs of that person. Indeed, the Prison Department strongly

believes that no person in custody should be deprived of access to the range of reading material normally available through the public services to people in the community, or be required to accept lower standards of provision. The very nature of custodial regimes intensifies demand for reading material and brings to many a recognition of the value of reading. It is not surprising therefore that prisoners who have rarely used public library services become intensive users of prison libraries while in custody. It is not unknown for as many as 80 per cent of prisoners in some establishments to be library users.

There is considerable variation in prison establishments. They vary from open establishments where inmates have freedom to move around with minimum constraints within the establishment to those catering for prisoners who are high security risks and whose movements are consequently highly controlled. There are establishments for young offenders and for adults, for male and for female; for short sentence prisoners and long sentence prisoners. Many prisons were built in Victorian times while others are of modern design. Some establishments cater for a population of 75 trainees; others accommodate 1500 or more prisoners. No two establishments are identical and equally no two public library authorities providing a service are the same. With such a large variation, complete standardisation is not possible; nor is it desirable in the very human situation which obtains.

The secure custody of prisoners is accepted by all as the primary objective of the prison service, but over the years the interpretation of this role has changed. The early emphasis on retribution and punishment has given way to a belief in treatment and training to prepare the prisoner for a return to society. Secure custody and treatment and training are not necessarily incompatible. A combination of treating inmates as individuals, having a good relationship with them and providing a wide range of activities, including library services, constitutes a powerful, dynamic security. The main objective of providing a library must be to strengthen and support the objectives of the prison service. It is clear that libraries have a positive contribution to make both to secure custody and to treatment and training.

As already noted, custody does not of itself change the reading needs of a person. It is also recognised that all strata of society, all professions and occupations, and all levels of educational attainment are represented in the prison population. But clearly there are differences to which the library planner must pay heed. These fall into two broad categories: those related to the nature of custody, and those related to the nature of the population.

THE NATURE OF CUSTODY

Though the unoccupied time of a prisoner is frequently over-estimated, it is undoubtedly true that most prisoners have unoccupied time and that the range of pursuits available to fill that time is relatively small. This is particularly true in the Victorian remand prisons. It is not surprising, therefore, that when an adequate library service is provided, reading becomes a popular activity. Nor is it surprising that the reading tends to be of an escapist nature! But not exclusively so. The more intensive use of prison libraries owes a great deal to the use of books and library materials to pursue interests awakened by education and training programmes, including newly acquired work skills. The public library service's role in supporting such programmes is an essential one. The concentrated nature of the time allowed for the use of libraries in most prisons and the restricted size of the stock which can be made available also create particular problems. Since books have to be selected rapidly, particular attention needs to be paid to stock categorisation. Display and collections must be continually refreshed by regular exchanges of stock. This latter point is particularly important in long stay prisons.

THE NATURE OF THE POPULATION

Though persons from all walks of life may be found in the prison population, the mix is undoubtedly different to and fluctuates more rapidly than the population served by the standard public library. Just how different is unclear, but it is common to find a concentration of the less able and the less well educated, and of people with poor or non-existent reading skills. Some prisons also house a growing number of people whose mother tongue and cultural background are not British. These facts have obvious implications for stock selection and provision. They also point to the need for an emphasis on user education, particularly in view of the large number of prisoners who lack experience as library users.

Within the wider objectives of the public library service, the objectives of a prison library are, then, to encourage the reading habit, to provide book and non-book material for recreation/leisure activity, information, education (social, personal, remedial, cultural, academic, vocational), training guidance (including work experience), rehabilitation and therapy; and to support the education, training, welfare and work programmes within the prison.

In identifying the scope and nature of the library services required to meet the objectives stated above, my comments can only be expressed in general terms and in no way obviate the need for librarians, working closely with their colleagues in the prison education service, to prepare a careful analysis of the changing needs of each individual institution. The development and constant revision of the profile of a prison and its community is an essential pre-requisite for the provision of an effective service. Much of the information which should be included in such a profile is collected for other purposes and could be collated from individual prisoner records, e.g. age, education, work experience and courses being undertaken by prisoners.

I will now look at three issues which are key to providing a prison library. They are:

1 provision of library materials and their exploitation

2 staffing of library services

3 library accommodation.

LIBRARY STOCK

Libraries, whatever their type and size, should seek to meet the needs of the community they serve. In order that the prison library service may anticipate, meet and encourage the whole spectrum of needs within an establishment, it is imperative that the range, type and levels of stock are of at least the same standard as those of a good public branch library outside.

The type of material that should be provided in a prison library includes the following.

(a) **Material in support of basic education**

Here the library service can provide strong support, not only in the teaching of literacy but also in the maintenance and development of newly acquired skills. The stock should include books with a high illustration content and the great variety of materials now being produced to meet the particular needs of new readers. The inclusion in the library of scrap books produced by prisoners could be useful in conjunction with project work in education.

(b) **Material for ethnic minority groups**

It is particularly important to be aware of the needs of newly settled immigrants and ethnic groups and the materials that can meet their needs. The provision of foreign language materials is important, as is English language material relevant to the cultural backgrounds of individual members of ethnic minority groups. There is also the less recognised need for a library stock to represent positively the history, art and literature of each ethnic group to all members of the multi-cultural population. This type of material is sometimes difficult to obtain; foreign embassies have been particularly helpful in providing such materials.

(c) **Recreational materials**

The library stock should provide for and encourage recreational reading. Although the biggest demand will always be for the more popular types of creative writing — westerns, thrillers and science fiction — this should not detract from the often latent popularity of others, such as poetry, biography, the classics and modern novels. Material on sport, hobbies and on vocational skills should also be available and should be positively promoted. Even those who think they have little use for reading have interests which could be extended and enhanced by the library service.

(d) **Periodicals**

Periodicals have an important part to play in broadening the appeal of the library in that the format and style of the periodical are often attractive to those not in the habit of reading. The provision of periodicals should be a part of the normal responsibility of public library authorities, but this provision is supplemented and supported by other sources, particularly in the case of material related to the education programme.

(e) **Paperbacks**

Paperback books have a similar role to play in making the library more attractive to prisoners who might, along with a significant proportion of the population, equate hard back books with study and paperback books with entertainment.

(f) **Large print books**

In common with the public library, large print books should be available for the partially sighted.

(g) **Reference materials**

The provision of reference materials to answer the general range of enquiries is vital. Reference materials should be designated by the professional librarian, but every prison library should have an up-to-date encyclopaedia and a selection of dictionaries, annuals, directories and handbooks. In many cases it is not possible to allow prisoners time in the library to consult reference books; in these cases short-term loans can usually be made.

Prison library stock is selected by a professional librarian drawing on the knowledge and experience of the prison officer librarian, education officers and teaching staff. These staff maintain close links with other groups of staff and prisoners through frequent visits to the library, reception/induction interviews and discussions with users and staff, and by monitoring requests so as to be aware of present and future needs.

Particular attention should be given to stock categorisation and display. When the time available to an individual for use of the library is limited, it is sensible for stock to be arranged in broad subject categories with group-related interest areas which do not necessarily follow the traditional Dewey classification scheme. Thus, as a simple example, all western novels may be shelved together with non-fiction material on the Old West, including biographies, history, travel and geography.

The guiding of the stock is obviously of paramount importance with a particular need for clarity and simplicity. Attention is also given to the display of material both as a means of promoting a particular subject and as a way of making the library more attractive to reluctant users.

A number of factors have to be taken into account when determining the level of stock in prisons. Most of these are concerned with the great variety of circumstances which may be found in prison establishments, including accommodation constraints. The most significant of these is the size of the establishment. It may house anywhere between 70 and 1600 prisoners. This clearly presents difficulties in determining a realistic national standard.

Other factors which need to be taken into account include the average length of stay (as opposed to sentence) within a particular establishment, and the ease and frequency of access, coupled with the number of books a prisoner is allowed to borrow. Where access to the library is infrequent, regular readers will need to borrow more books, thus making considerable demands on the stock. Further influence, bearing in mind the supportive role of the library, is the scope and nature of the education and training programmes available. A combination of all these factors makes the prison library service unique. It is inappropriate to apply standards which have been formulated for other institutions — hospitals, for example. Nor is it appropriate to take other national or international standards as a basis. Not only do standards of library service vary from country to country, but penal systems show a wide range of both philosophy and organisation. In England and Wales, we have agreed with the public library authorities that the book stock should be based on a figure of 10 books per capita, or 5000 volumes — whichever is the greater. We recognise that the minimum figure of 5000 may be inappropriate in very small establishments and should only be regarded as a guideline for local negotiation. The following table indicates the stock which should be provided in varying sizes of establishment. We have also agreed that the stock should include one periodical per 10 inmates with a minimum provision of 15 titles. In establishments with populations over 550 duplicate titles may be needed.

MINIMUM LEVELS OF BOOK STOCK IN PRISON LIBRARIES

Establishment population	Minimum stock
Up to 150	1500
151–350	3500
351–550	5500
551–850	8500
851 and above	related directly to population at rate of 10 items per capita

These are minimum standards for central library stock. Where physical or other restraints prevent even this minimum being maintained, the rate of stock exchange must be increased accordingly. The major factor which influences the rate of stock exchange (which is much easier to assess in the prison setting) is the frequency of change of library membership. Average length of stay is a readily available statistic in every establishment. A short stay establishment will obviously have different requirements to those of an

establishment with a significant number of long term prisoners. We have therefore agreed with the public libraries that a minimum of 20 per cent of the stock should be exchanged each year. In some circumstances, complete exchanges of stock might be necessary. The whole process of stock exchange is carried out under supervision of the professional librarian responsible for the prison library.

All local library authorities now agree with the Prison Department that the over-all physical standard of material in a prison library should be no poorer than that which is readily available to the general public. The public library authorities readily acknowledge that the incidence of damage to books in the training prisons is less than that in the outside community. However, the book stock in short term remand prisons is subjected to a higher level of vandalism. Experience has shown that the incidence of vandalism almost directly correlates with the standard of the book stock — a poor book stock is more likely to be vandalised than a well presented up-to-date book stock.

Stock editing is a continuing process in every establishment and is normally carried out by the professional librarian responsible for the service.

As in any outside library or information service, the facility to request material which is not already available is fundamental to the over-all level of service. A request system is particularly important in prison libraries where stocks are limited. The range of demand is surprisingly wide. Many prison libraries now have on-line computers to the local authority library stock; this makes ordering books from outside sources easy and fairly quick. The provision of computers to all prison libraries is now being considered.

STAFFING LIBRARY SERVICES

The team concerned with the operation of the library is normally made up of four categories of staff: prison education officer, professional librarian with responsibility for the service at a particular establishment, prison officer librarian and inmate assistant. Together they are responsible for providing an efficient and effective library service, but to achieve this objective all levels of prison staff should receive some instruction in the purpose and value of the library service.

The prison education officer has managerial responsibility for the library service. The obvious links between the library and education make this a sensible approach. It has the added benefit of giving the service a representative at management level within the establishment in a way which is not possible without the appointment of a full-time professional librarian. Education officers are responsible to prison governors for library facilities. Their duties involve the supervision of the prison library and staff at the operational level. They are responsible for the integration of the library into the regime of the prison generally and the education programme in particular, acting as secretaries and convenors of Prison Library Committees and responsible for liaison with chief officers responsible for library services, through the professional librarian. In view of their management role, they need have no formal training in library routines but should be familiar with the general policy and objectives of the library service. Induction courses, provided by the local public library service, include these areas and the back-up services which are available from the public library service.

The professional librarian responsible for the service at a particular prison is seconded from the local public library service. The librarian is responsible to a senior member of the public library management team for the provision of an efficient library service within a particular establishment, or possibly a number of establishments. The duties of the librarian are concerned with providing professional advice, services and supervision. The work includes close contact with users and with other members of the operational team, particularly the education officer and the prison officer librarian.

Induction training for librarians assigned to work within prisons includes instruction in the philosophy and practice of penology, and the characteristics of the regime within the particular establishment. Most prison libraries have one or more prison officer librarian. Depending upon the size of the establishment, they may devote part or all of their time to library duties. They are responsible to the prison governor for the maintenance of discipline within the library and to the education officer for the day-to-day running of the library and the supervision of inmate assistants.

The prison service has recently decided to phase out prison officer librarians and replace them with a fully seconded professional librarian from the local authority. Three key issues led me to gain Prison Board

acceptance for this change. Firstly, it costs less to employ a professional librarian than a trained prison officer. Secondly, a prison officer has very little professional knowledge of running a library service. The employment of a fully qualified professional librarian will greatly enhance the library provision within an establishment and thirdly, we do not need custodial staff in the majority of our prison libraries.

The inmate library assistant is responsible to the officer librarian for routine tasks associated with the day-to-day running of the library. These are mainly clerical duties. Many inmate librarians are now trained by outside professional librarians to the level where they are capable of taking a formal examination in basic librarianship.

STAFFING LEVELS OF PRISON LIBRARIES

Establishment Population	Professional Librarian Hours	Officer Librarian Hours	Inmate Assistants Hours	Library Opening Hours
0–150	7	10	14	7
151–350	14	20	28	14
351–550	20	30	40	20
551–850	24	34	42	24
851–1150	30	42	45	30
1151+	.....	pro rata	.....	

These figures represent guidelines only since conditions and facilities in prison establishments vary considerably. Library opening hours and staffing levels should take into consideration special local circumstances such as the number of library units or the geographical dispersal of the inmates in relation to the library, and the need for prison officer librarians to undertake other tasks at other times. It is also true to say that the recommended attendance time for professional librarians has never matched up to the recommended figures. With the demise of the officer librarian we can look afresh at all these issues.

LIBRARY ACCOMMODATION

Only when a new prison is being planned, or a major extension or alteration is contemplated, is it possible to think in terms of purpose-built library

accommodation. In the initial stages of planning new prison establishments or of renovating existing buildings there is always consultation between the Prison Department and the public library authority regarding requirements and the design of the accommodation. In all new accommodation, libraries are situated in education centres. We recognise that the majority of prisoners will visit the library in order to browse and select books for reading outside the library. However, in new libraries we provide areas within the library where inmates may sit to read books and periodicals, to study, to participate in small group meetings, discussions and other library-based or related activities. A basic guide to the desirable minimum size of the library has now been agreed between the Prison Department and the Library Association. The schedule of accommodation is detailed as **Figure 1** (see page 22).

SCHEDULE OF ACCOMMODATION

Similarly agreed schedules of library furniture and shelving have also been agreed and are similar in standard to that which would be found in a public library. We also recognise that a high level of lighting is essential, particularly in areas where protracted reading and close work is likely, e.g. in the reference and study areas and the service area. All our new libraries are carpeted; the over-all aim is to make the library attractive for relaxed reading and quiet study.

Figure 1: Schedule of accommodation

Space	Standard	Example: requirements for a 351-550 population institution			
		Shelving	Tables	Seating	Area
Service area	minimum $9m^2$		service desk	2	$9m^2$
Workroom/office	allow $9m^2$ for each member of staff present at any one time	as much as possible outsize type	worktop desk	3	$18m^2$
Lending library	allow $1m^2$ per 100 books shelved	120m run		4	$37m^2$
Reading area	allow $2.5m^2$ for each seat	15m run of periodical slopes	1 low	6	$15m^2$
Reference or Study area	allow $3m^2$ for each seat	5m run	4	4	$12m^2$
Store	Minimum $2m^2$				$2m^2$
					$93m^2$
		Allow 10% balance area			$9m^2$
					$102m^2$

PRISON SERVICE VOCATIONAL TRAINING IN THE 1990s

Christine Braddock
Head of School of Art, Design and Community Education
Dudley College

Until recently there has been no universally accepted objective for the prison service. Different establishments, even though of similar type, have developed in different ways and produced different environments in which education departments have had to work.

CI/55/84 and the Prison Board Statement on the Task and Functions of the Service have largely overcome the problem of fragmentation and created a framework in which it is now possible to address the issue of common and compatible aims for prison education. Local prisons have moved forward by implementing some of the recommendations made in the report 'Education in Local Prisons' which emphasised the need for better communication between this type of establishment and the training prison to ensure continuity by means of linked curricula. It also emphasised the need for counselling of inmates, including the process through which they are likely to go as they pass through the prison system, including the opportunities available to them at various stages.

During the years since the present structure was implemented, there have been many developments. Educational, social, demographic and resource changes are challenges to which Education Departments have had to respond. In turn these have demanded new approaches, new skills and different attitudes.

Vocational training, education and libraries are three elements of the education services managed by Chief Education Officers Branch (CEOB). Vocational training is the only element not delivered through the local education authority. Its development has reflected the initiatives made as a consequence of the changing needs of prisoners and society at large.

THE PRESENT POSITION

In the 1950s education was seen as being concerned solely with knowledge and ideas, and not with the world of work and the acquisition of skills. Historically, education departments provided only part time, mainly evening, education. For many years now, education and training have been seen as complementary elements, both providing learning opportunities to enrich personal development and employment. Education in prison department establishments, supported by stronger attachments to colleges of further education, now contribute substantially to regimes. Both forms of provision provide job-related and personal learning. We aim to ensure that all courses provide an update and increased knowledge of skills for those wishing to seek work within their existing occupations or provide a foundation skill for those wishing to embark on a new occupation, including self-employment.

Many factors have influenced the delivery of existing vocational training. Chief Education Officers Branch (CEOB) have over the last few years rationalised the position. In March 1989 there were 176 vocational training courses staffed by civilian instructors. There are, in addition, five Braille courses operated by officer instructor posts. This represents a total of 36 different curriculum areas throughout the service. Within each curriculum area there is wide scope and variety for inmates to develop their individual skills.

In addition to developing the range of courses, CEOB have implemented management structures which have supported and assisted education officers, thus integrating their services with the skills offered throughout the establishment. This response has led to many new exciting and challenging initiatives which have played a major part in influencing the way we have delivered and developed vocational training.

CEOB recognised that training opportunities would come not only from traditional education and vocational courses, but from opportunities created

by training experiences within the establishment. It also recognised the need to develop accredited training initiatives which reflect the total needs of its clientele. The planning on new curricula has therefore been based on the geographical area of the inmate population, current and future labour market trends, present and historical education provision and the major changes taking place in the accrediting of vocational skills and the way they are being delivered (National Vocational Qualifications). This last initiative will have the greatest effect on the development of training.

There are difficulties. Our present management structure has restricted the way we are able to respond to change; recruitment of staff and accommodation present particular problems. Education and training are changing rapidly in terms of content, delivery and assessment. To be effective we have to be responsive, flexible and have the capacity to adapt — sometimes difficult with the geographic nature of the service. If high quality training is to be achieved it is essential to be able to change direction according to circumstances and respond to developments. We have made considerable progress, but still have a long way to go in terms of staff development.

In the past we have invested in large capital plant machinery and concentrated on heavy engineering skills which have quickly become outdated. Motor vehicle and engineering are two industries which have undergone dramatic changes in their training. We have in some cases been unable to ensure that staff and equipment meet modern day requirements.

Considerable effort by the service has been made to devise certified qualifications where none existed. We have become instrumental in developing a range of skills tests now adopted by the large examining boards. This has been difficult and time consuming but very effective.

Considerable success has been achieved despite the facts that training courses are all voluntary and the background and abilities of people entering the scheme are so diverse. Many inmates have left prison with significant qualifications which have assisted them in entering employment on release. We have helped many with completion of application forms and interview techniques, trying wherever possible to provide a package which meets over-all requirements rather than the purely singular aim of acquiring a skill.

Over the last few years certain educational procedures delivered through vocational training have been recognised as effective and been absorbed

into the scheme. We have tried to ensure that all prison education services are offered on a learner-centred basis, allowing inmates to negotiate as far as possible the style and targets of their individual programmes. The maximising of accessibility and equality of opportunities for inmates within the prison education system are all strands of the over-all development process. The monitoring and evaluation of the curriculum under the direction of colleges of further education bring it closer to the outside industrial and educational world. In this way, with sufficient support and guidance, inmates can make full use of their newly acquired accredited skills, a most important part of the process.

THE FUTURE

A great deal of research and evaluation has been undertaken to enable CEOB to make recommendations to the prison service and Prison Board on the factors affecting staffing, operations and management. Surveys of trainees and staff have shown clearly the way in which we need to proceed in the future. The new accrediting structure (NVQ) must now be implemented. In order to do this effectively and coherently many changes have to be made to existing courses.

We have recognised that specific training experiences make positive contributions to individual's prospects and aspirations. We want to build in the cumulative effects of the training experiences inmates have had throughout their lives to increase their employment prospects and their job satisfaction, both within the establishment and on release.

We hope to establish a culture which will enable all those involved in the delivery of educational opportunities within the prison service to recognise the value of education to the inmates. Inmates often see themselves as failures and need help in reassessing their abilities and analysing their present and future situations in new ways.

We recognise that education and training are important elements in resettlement. Since it is generally difficult for offenders to find jobs, their interest in education and training is weighted towards employability. They believe that vocational training should be job specific or related to self-employment. We are developing provision to ensure that it reflects this need.

A far greater proportion of the prison population undertakes education and training than does the general public. We are aiming to ensure that training is made as productive and relevant as possible by operating a systematic development plan for range and type of provision and inmate needs.

The establishment of a national database has assisted colleagues across the country to access detailed information on areas of development, new training initiatives, current labour market trends, educational opportunities and relevant information about the provision within individual establishments. Electronic transportation from one department to another ensures that staff know and understand the type of education and training experience individuals have undertaken, to assist them in making informed choices regarding their future.

This co-ordinated plan and innovative approach offers very positive opportunities which we know will assist inmates' employability and demonstrate sensitivity, empathy and support for the improvement of their quality of life on release.

THE MANAGEMENT OF REGIMES

Ian Dunbar
Regional Director
Home Office Prison Service
South West Region

Regimes ought to and can be managed. We can do something positive with the resources we have — the teachers, the prison officers and the other staff.

When I first went to America as a member of the Control Review Team I was very impressed by the ability of some American prisons to run very well, and totally depressed by the appalling situation that I found in other American prisons. The common feature running through the superb prisons was the way in which their 'Prisoner Programmes' were delivered. When I met the Deputy Commissioner of New York State's Prison System (which actually has far worse problems than ours), he very proudly said, 'You need to realise that we are a Programme-Run state'. In American jargon that can be translated as, 'We really believe that the way to control our prisoners is to keep them actively engaged'. It is noteworthy in terms of 'Best Practice' abroad and, also, 'Best Practice' in this country that those establishments which were running very well were those in which staff and prisoners worked together and were actively involved in the pursuit of constructive activities. The worst establishments I came across were those where there was very little activity, either among the staff or prisoners. The staff and prisoners had in a sense withdrawn from each other and the appearance of control was illusory.

I discovered on my visits that the very best establishments were those in which each person was treated as an individual. Individual programmes

were planned, each prisoner was seen and told how long he had; where he was likely to go and what he could do was planned from day 1. There was a relationship between the staff and the prisoner, rather than a barrier between them. Staff were not so much acting as guards but were acting with the prisoner. And staff were treated in the same way.

If we look back at the way prisons have been run over the last 200 years, it is all too obvious that they haven't been very successful in terms of what they were trying to achieve. It is very important for any organisation to identify its aims and then translate them into identifiable tasks, so that staff are aware of what they are expected to achieve. This ought then to be measured and, having been measured, we ought to look at whether the measurement is demonstrating whether or not a satisfactory level of delivery is being achieved.

We, in the prison service, are now involved in colossal changes. This is because we have not been as successful in delivering as we should have been. Years ago the English prison service was seen as the exemplar, the one other countries came to learn from. That is no longer so, but I would like to think that we are now getting ouselves in better order. We are moving forward, and we are going to bring about changes which will mean that our aspirations can be met. This is going to be a very long, a very slow and in many ways a very painful process.

An important first step was the introduction of Fresh Start. The essence of prison work is that it is primarily custodial, implying both the care and control of inmates, and it requires a sound management structure to support it. Structures are not ends in themselves; they are merely mechanisms to enable all staff to discharge their duties in the most efficient way. With this in mind, key considerations informing the review of staffing patterns and the management structure in establishments were:

1 the focus on the inmate and the relationship between staff and inmate;

2 the integration of security, inmate care and control;

3 the fullest delegation of responsibility for work activities;

4 encouragement of team working.

The aim was to provide a framework within which staff — our major resource — are able to give of their best, both in the interests of their own development and job satisfaction and of getting the job done well. That was what we are hoping to achieve with Fresh Start.

Secondly, there was the introduction of Circular Instruction 55/1984 which set out to achieve a link between what management wanted and what was going to be delivered. It made governors much more accountable for the running of their prisons than they have been in the past.

When I became governor of Wakefield I was not given specific instructions as to what to do; I was told, 'Keep the roof on'. The situation today is very different: (a) because of the introduction of Circular Instruction 55/1984 and (b) because we've developed the concept of accountability. The good governor is no longer seen as the guy who keeps things quiet, but as the person who can be seen to be delivering in terms of financial control, in terms of security and in terms of regime delivery. In 1984 we were very much at the beginning of this. Chris Train, in a memo dated 20 December 1984, said (in 55/1984) 'The procedure outlined is a two-way process allowing the Prisons Board to transmit its intentions in the running of establishments and allowing establishments to communicate their priorities to the Board. The prison service must have a clear vision of the need to care for, to help, and if possible to influence for the better the prisoners who are sent to it. That vision must be translated into concrete language which provides a practical tool for management purposes.'

Fresh Start on its own is not enough. We have to do a lot more. We are asking the governor to form a contract with myself as regional director. This contract breaks down tasks into various subheads. The governor is now accountable to me, for instance, to see that prisoners are occupied as fully as possible throughout the whole week with a balanced and integrated regime which may include work, education, physical education, access to libraries and individual and collective leisure activities. Some governors are not delivering the agreed level of activity. Having highlighted those establishments which are not fulfilling their contract, I, with my team, will be asking governors for specific reasons as to why they have not delivered.

There was in the past no way in which we could measure. We had no idea as to what was actually going on. I believe that the kind of information required sets the seal on what establishments will deliver. Up until four years ago the only information that could be measured was about escapes

and serious assaults — necessary but very negative measures. I believe that is one of the reasons why, when it came to a showdown in terms of resources or anything else, the top priority always became security — even though security was far from being the only issue. With the setting up of contracts, the monitoring system which now exists, and the information which must now be provided, staff at all levels are becoming more aware of the importance of regime activities. Managerially this is very important because, for example, not all staff are convinced of the value of getting prisoners to educational classes.

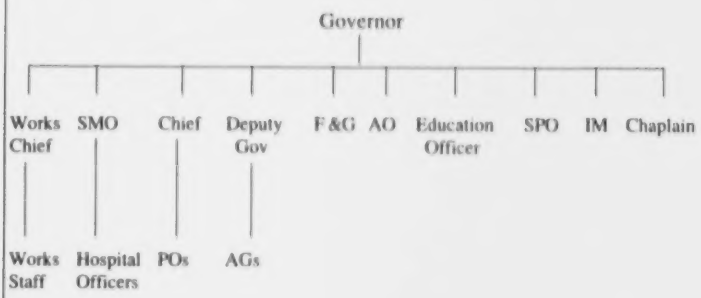
In my visits to prisons in North America I observed that the best way to achieve security is to involve people — staff and prisoners — in various activities by using relationships. This affects the regime in many ways which are not immediately apparent. The Deputy Commissioner of New York State told me, 'By taking this line, we have managed to reduce the number of escapes and assaults'. When you think about it, it is not surprising but many staff still believe that happiness is door-shaped. In other words, they feel safer by keeping prisoners behind locked doors. One of the sad things which arises from this attitude is that if you rely too much on the physical side of security you ignore personal relationships. We have to concentrate on dynamic security, getting the right balance which makes it safer for us all. We are trying to get across to staff that prisoners have to be involved in some kind of activity throughout the day. This is extremely important from the point of view of prison education officers.

THE ROLE AND FUNCTION OF THE HEAD OF INMATE ACTIVITIES: A PRACTITIONER'S APPROACH

Alison Gomme
Head of Inmate Activities
Home Office Prison Service
HMP Channings Wood

In order to understand where we are today, it is useful to consider the reporting and accountability lines pre-Fresh Start (see **Figure 2**). Under this model many people reported direct to the governor and lines of

Figure 2

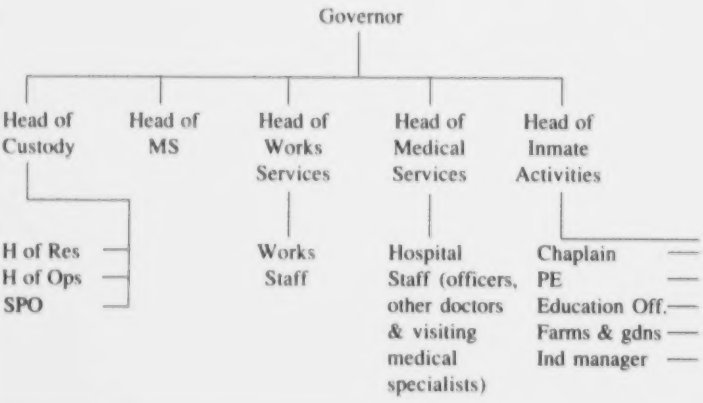


accountability were often unclear. The governor had responsibility for the co-ordination of the regime in addition to several other duties.

Those who did not have responsibility for the regime often had direct responsibility for the deployment of staff and it was they who determined when aspects of the regime went ahead.

Part of the thrust of Fresh Start was to remove overtime working. Another important feature was to improve the lines of management accountability by reducing the number of people who reported directly to the governor. Consequently the hierarchical model of management was introduced (see **Figure 3**).

Figure 3

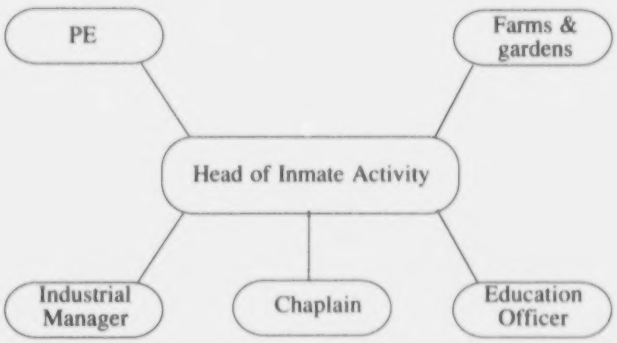


Under this model the head of inmate activities is responsible to the governor for the delivery of the prison regime as agreed in the Annual Contract (CI 55/84). Education officers are responsible to the governor via the head of inmate activities for the delivery of one aspect of the prison regime. There are, however, drawbacks to this model. It suggests that line management exists within the penal setting only, which is an inappropriate concept for 'specialists' who have line management for professional matters outside the prison. Heads of inmate activities were **not** introduced to subsume this

professional accountability with the Chief Education Officer's Branch (at national and regional levels) and the local education authority.

This hierarchical model also suggests that the only lines of communication are up and down the line as opposed to between inmate activity group members and between other functional groups. It may be more appropriate to consider the work of the inmate activity group under the model shown in **Figure 4**.

Figure 4



All departments have an individual contract with the head of inmate activities and vice versa in order that the regime is delivered and the work of individual departments can go forward. Departments may have contracts with each other; certainly all contracts need to 'dovetail', as far as is reasonably practical, so that there are not too many conflicting activities within the regime.

Contracts between groups may be frequent, occasional or never. The model illustrated in **Figure 4** also allows for that communication system outside the prison which forms the basis of professional accountability.

Individual contracts are drawn up each year under the auspices of CI 55/84 and form the basis of the contract which every governor has with his/her

regional director — the work which will be delivered by the prison during the forthcoming year. The work of the inmate activities group should form a significant part of the establishment contract, particularly in training prisons. This section of the document will show how the prison regime fits in with wider prison routines.

It is on the basis of the contract between the head of inmate activities and each departmental head that the delivery of the regime is made possible. The head of inmate activities should regularly review to what extent the regime is being delivered, any impediments to regime delivery and ways in which the regime can be enhanced/improved.

The head of inmate activities should establish annually with each departmental head what is to be achieved over the next 12 months — this will form the basis of the next year's contract. It is the responsibility of the head of inmate activity to dovetail all aspects of the regime together and thus ensure that the most effective regime is delivered within the resources available, taking into account the needs of the establishment and the needs and wishes of prisoners.

Through this subcontractors' model, the concept of regime delivery has been turned upside down. Rather than being placed at the bottom of the pile, departmental heads have strengthened positions. They now have a personal contact with the regional director through the head of inmate activities for the provision of certain pre-conditions (prisoner selection, provision of uniformed staff, plant and equipment, etc.) which allows them to deliver their part of the contract — the regime.

Complaints should be made if the delivery of the regime is not possible and the contract is thus broken. Departmental heads should take advantage of having a subcontractor — the head of inmate activities.

In order to achieve a balanced regime of purposeful activity the distinguishing characteristics of a head of inmate activities might be:

Facilitator — the one who makes things possible;

Encourager — encouraging things to happen;

Co-ordinator — dovetailing aspects of the regime together;

Negotiator;

Trouble shooter — fighting battles on others' behalf;

Supporter — the strong voice on the policy committee;

— Someone who knows their way around the system and can get the best out of it;

— The person who ensures that the current regime is delivered, measures the effectiveness of the current regime and is the driving force behind regime development and improvement;

— A team leader;

— The holder of a good portfolio of knowledge, and analytical and planning skills;

— Good interpersonal skills;

— The person who brings out the best in people.

While considering the last point, I came up with the final model, 'the conductor of the orchestra'. The head of inmate activities is the conductor of the orchestra and all departmental groups form different orchestral groups. The size of the establishment and its function determine whether a chamber orchestra, string quartet or symphony orchestra is required.

During different movements of a particular piece of music, the conductor will bring out individual instrumental groups to be more dominant. Solo playing may also be required.

Different composers (regimes) place different importance on particular players (contrast Mahler, Mozart, Elgar, Britten, Lloyd Webber), as do different types of music (concertos, symphonies, light opera, etc).

It is, however, important to realise that at different stages particular instrumental parts will be important and without all the players co-operating and following the instructions of the conductor the piece will be incomplete. Being an excellent musician does not necessarily make one a good orchestral player. A good team member who co-operates with others

and allows them to shine is a more valued member than a talented isolationist.

All of our orchestras (i.e. all penal establishments) are funded separately and it is the funding organisation (the Prisons Board and individual governors) who determine which pieces of music should be played. The conductor may not approve of this but will want to get the best out of his/her orchestra even if that programme is restrictive and will not display the true potential of the orchestra. The orchestra may not enjoy this position either, particularly those parts which only have a small part to play. But an orchestra with high standards of professionalism will always give its best performance.

It goes without saying that individuals are all capable of playing alone to a high standard — it is the conductor who is needed to pull the parts together and interpret the piece with appropriate instructions of speed, dynamics and tone.

Over the years, the style, shape and tone of the music will come and go as fashions change. The conductor is likely to change from time to time and this is when the professionalism of the players is so important: they should be able to play without a conductor, play the same piece of music in a different way according to the directions of a new conductor, change the programme at the last minute and still give a high quality performance, and accept new members of the orchestra as it grows and develops its repertoire.

In summary, I have presented three models applicable to post-Fresh Start. The first, the hierarchical model, was, I believe, introduced as a framework to be built upon. Thus the second model — reinforcing the work undertaken in individual establishment contracts under CI 55/84 — recognises the importance of accountability outside the prison. The final model is lighthearted but one which indicates that the head of inmate activities should be positive, supportive and assist individuals in getting the best out of available resources which should result in improved delivery.

Incidentally, the prisoners form the choir. The choir needs the orchestra and the orchestra the choir in order to perform certain tasks. After all, Fresh Start was introduced to bring the prisoner back to the 'centre stage'. Without prisoners there would be no need for regimes, heads of inmate activities or specialist departments.

CONDITIONS OF SERVICE FOR STAFF IN FURTHER EDUCATION

David Marston
Principal Education Officer
Home Office Prison Service
Chief Education Officers Branch

Lecturers employed in prison service establishments are employees of local education authorities (LEAs), either through a local college or through direct employment. The Home Office reimburses the LEA the actual cost of the teaching plus five per cent to cover administrative and support costs. It is therefore important to remember that LEAs have the central role in negotiating and agreeing salaries and conditions of service. The Home Office advises LEAs on matters specific to prison service establishments, just as NATFHE is advised by its prison service members.

Salaries and conditions of service of lecturers in further education are determined by the National Joint Council (NJC). This has an independent chairman and, representing the employers, eight members of the Association of County Councils, six members of the Association of Metropolitan Authorities and one representative of the Welsh Joint Education Committee. Employees are represented by 12 representatives of NATFHE, two representatives of the Association of Principals of Colleges, one representative each of those involved in agricultural education and art and design education. NJC decisions are reached when a majority of both sides agree. Thus it is not possible for the employees' side to impose a decision by the use of its small in-built majority. In addition, the Department of Education and Science (DES) has two observers, the Home Office has one, as has the Northern Ireland Office. These observers attend

meetings of the employers' side and also full meetings of the NJC, but do not vote.

IMPLICATIONS

In considering the implications of conditions of service agreements for lecturers in prison service establishments, it has to be remembered that there are over 50,000 full-time lecturers in further education in England and Wales, but only 600-700 in prisons. This represents between one and two per cent of the total work force and it is therefore unrealistic to expect special consideration to be given to staff in prisons as part of over-all national negotiations. This, however, has been recognised; a small working party with representatives from the employers' side and from NATFHE meets to discuss matters which concern prison education in particular.

Until 1989 there was a separate handbook on conditions of service for lecturers in prison service establishments which was colloquially known as the 'Green Book'. For 1989 and onwards the conditions of service of all lecturers in further education have been brought together in a 'Silver Book' which contains separate sections on specialist groups, e.g. lecturers in prison education, lecturers in agricultural education. The major new items which relate to all lecturers are the agreement on averaging by which lecturers can be asked to teach for up to, in any one term or equivalent period, two and a half additional hours per week for up to nine weeks — on condition that they receive a compensatory reduction in hours elsewhere in the year; and greater security of tenure for part-time lecturers. The sections referring specifically to prison education deal with the probationary period for new entrants to prison education, the power of governors in relation to exclusion from the prison, gradings of departments which are different from those in general further education, the student hours count and the allocation of 30 points for each vocational training course.

CURRENT NEGOTIATIONS

Negotiations on issues of pay and conditions of service have not yet been completed. In relation to conditions of service no changes are proposed for staff graded up to senior lecturer — except that the employers want to clarify and strengthen the terms of the agreement on averaging. The employers propose to transfer principal lecturers, heads of department,

vice principals and principals from their present separate salary scales to a management spine. The grading of a post on the spine would no longer be determined solely by the volume or grade of work, but by the employers on the basis of various factors. A particularly contentious proposal is that the present leave entitlement should be changed to a minimum of 30 working days plus bank holidays.

Some specific elements in the employers' offer related to prison education staff are felt to be helpful. It is proposed that all prison education officers should be transferred to the management spine. This would remove the current anomaly whereby about 15 education officers have been graded on the former lecturer grade II scale and would, under current arrangements, be replaced when they left by education officers on the main lecturer grade. Similarly, the employers propose that all deputy education officers should be graded at senior lecturer level. There is, however, no prospect of these positive elements in relation to prison service staff being agreed outside the general negotiations on the management spine and the extended working year.

The present grading system for education officers depends on the volume of work in terms of student hours generated by the department, with an additional 30 points for each vocational training course. The cut-off points for prison education departments are lower than in mainstream further education, so some recognition has been given to the extra difficulties of working in a prison setting and also of generating student hours. The allocation of 30 points for each vocational training course clearly over-estimated the number of student hours which would normally be generated by such a course.

The management proposal would mean all existing education officers would transfer to a comparable salary point on the new management spine and would, thereafter, have personal salary protection. As posts became vacant, the employers (LEAs and colleges) would determine the placing of the post on the management spine. In terms of prison education departments this would be done in consultation with the Home Office. It is therefore important that the Home Office have a consistent view across the country about the appropriate grade for education departments in similar establishments. Various models are now being examined as a basis for advising LEAs on appropriate gradings. These include a continuation of the use of student hours, including actual student hours arising from vocational training courses, as a base line but making specific allowance for the type

of institution or the existence of special units. There are various ways in which this could be achieved, e.g. by weighting for student hours for establishments such as remand centres or local prisons or, perhaps, by awarding an extra increment to recognise the difficult nature of certain establishments or the problems created by separate special units.

The definition of class contact hours generally is set out in Appendix VI of the Silver Book and is in line with the practice adopted by LEAs, but it also provides guidance on items specific to prison service establishments — such as Open University courses and other substantial open learning programmes.

The Teachers' Handbook is a source of good general advice. It is important for teachers to be aware of prison rules, particularly those which refer to acceptable relationships and contacts with inmates. For example, paragraph 25 makes it clear that, while it is often desirable for a teacher to take an interest in the education of an inmate on release and to offer a continuity of support, this can only be done with the prior approval and knowledge of the prison governor. It is important that all members of teaching staff are aware of the constraints within which they work.

The annual statistical return for 1988/1989 has been shortened, simplified and broken down into separate sections. It is hoped that as much of this information as possible will be incorporated onto computerised data bases. If this can be achieved, future education officers will need to update only those parts of the record which change. In the past the annual statistical return was used as a source of information for headquarters and regional staff in dealing with financial allocations, Parliamentary questions and various reports. This will continue to be important, but it is hoped to make the records more accessible to education officers who might find it useful to have information about the level of activity in other comparable establishments.

OFFICER-LED PRE-RELEASE TRAINING

Stephen Pryor
Regimes Management Unit
Home Office Prison Service
Headquarters

The aims of pre-release training are to help prisoners cope with imprisonment and to increase their desire to re-settle themselves in the community on release, by:

— providing training which emphasises:
building of confidence,
enhancing personal potential,
changing attitudes,
increasing awareness of their impact on others and the impact others have on them,
learning new skills,

and which, at the same time, provides opportunities for practical advice on work, housing, leisure, benefits and health by:

— ensuring that the experience is a planned and integrated part of the sentence;

— providing an environment in which prisoners feel safe to express themselves openly;

— encouraging the involvement of a range of people with appropriate knowledge and skills; and

— encouraging staff, particularly prison officers, to build useful relationships with prisoners, based on teaching skills relevant to this training.

PRESENT POSITION

CI 104/1959 states that pre-release courses should operate in all establishments. In the early years, development towards this goal was largely met by education departments — with a few courses led by specialists such as probation officers. Prison officer-led courses started in one or two low security category prisons in the mid-1970s and research showed that these were effective and produced great benefits to the inmate/officer relationship. Over the past two to three years there has been considerable growth in the number of establishments operating officer-led pre-release courses, this improvement being due partly to increased predictability and flexibility in making staff available following Fresh Start.

VALUE OF THE TRAINING

To inmates — The Communications and Relationships modules in the pre-release manual are the fundamental basis for the training. Experience has shown that social skills training is not only valuable in preparing inmates for release but has a much wider relevance, e.g. in helping individuals to cope with imprisonment and other challenges. It is for this reason that the general title of these officer-led courses has been expanded to 'Pre-release and Personal Development' courses.

To staff — Prison officers have found that the central training which they receive to run courses has developed their training skills and enhanced their general ability to deal with inmates constructively. Many observers have noticed that trained staff appear more confident when organising other activities with inmates.

HEADQUARTERS RESPONSIBILITY

Responsibility at headquarters for policy and central initiatives on officer-led pre-release courses remains with the Regimes Management Unit. I am

the current contact point, on 01-217 6481, and I am supported by Keith Bannister (01-217 6561) and Raj Samuel (01-217 6366).

REGIONAL RESPONSIBILITY

The promotion, development and support of officer-led courses lies with the regional office as part of its management oversight of establishments. The regional work includes the allocation of funds and places for training. Those currently nominated by regional directors as having responsibility for these courses are:

North:	Mr John Temple
Midlands:	Dr Linda Wilson
South East:	Mr John Harrison
South West:	Mr Peter Blunt

It has been recommended that the nominated officers or directing grades should visit courses in establishments regularly, if possible at least once a year.

OPERATION OF COURSES AT ESTABLISHMENTS

The central training of pre-release tutors and the pre-release manual provide a standard approach to course design and common elements to any syllabus. A survey of pre-release courses showed that it is possible to use this central guidance imaginatively and flexibly to produce courses of varying lengths to meet the needs of establishments and inmates.

At establishment level, to ensure that the activity is properly recognised, it is essential that it is:

- identified in the accountability chart;
- identified in the functions document section of the contract;
- identified in the job description of intermediate and group managers and course tutors (see suggested material at **Appendix 1**);

— identified in manpower reviews and on SPAR documentation;

— supported by a consistent and regular programme, avoiding the stop-go approach, and

— managed by staff who are clearly identified and who have participated in a pre-release managers' course.

Appendix 2 provides a list of essential equipment. All courses should have these items readily available. That does not mean that each course should have every item permanently allocated to it; if possible, equipment and materials available elsewhere in the establishment should be used. If the course is planned to run frequently it should have its own room with secure cupboards.

PRISONS BOARD PRIORITIES

Establishments without pre-release courses should plan now for their introduction in accordance with the initiative identified in Appendix III of the Director General's letter of 27 January 1989 entitled 'Prisons Board Priorities 1989/1990'. Establishments which cannot introduce such a course during 1989/90 should set a target date for its introduction by March 1992, in consultation with regional office, and draw up firm plans to meet this target.

FUNDING

Funds are required for these courses to purchase and maintain equipment, for fees for outside contributors and for miscellaneous expenditure. Setting-up costs should not normally exceed £2,300 per course with an average of about £600 annually needed thereafter for running costs. Funds for these purposes are earmarked within the education budget. For 1989/90 (and subsequent years in PES) estimates have been calculated by RMU according to bids from individual establishments and built into regional budgets.

These estimates are sufficient to enable all establishments to introduce a course within the next three years. Each autumn, regional offices will ask establishments to identify their needs for funds for pre-release courses for the following year and will later advise of approved expenditure.

Funding can be provided to individual establishments so that equipment can be obtained. The amount may depend on existing equipment in the establishment. For example, there are places where the education department can provide suitable video equipment during the day. Where this is not possible, start-up funding can be provided.

An annual support grant is also available; the amount will vary with the demands of each course. It is the responsibility of each course manager to assess the bid prepared by course tutors for inclusion as an identified element in the education budget bid submitted to regional office each October.

Items should be bought locally after comparing local retail prices under normal procurement procedures as set out in the Home Office Contracts Code — a copy of which is held in each establishment. This has been shown to be the most efficient and effective method, particularly in terms of promptness of delivery, after-sales service, cost and reliability. Establishments which have used the recommended Home Office suppliers have found that equipment has taken a long time to arrive, been more expensive than local retailers, has not been fully up-to-date and choice has been more limited.

Experience also suggests that buying video and TV equipment is cheaper than renting in the long run. While buying is generally to be preferred to hiring or renting, the test is which provides the best value for money, taking into account the need to maintain the equipment. If equipment has already been rented it is worth exploring the possibility of converting these agreements where this would prove more cost-effective.

TRAINING FOR PRISON OFFICERS AND MANAGERS

Training for prison officer tutors (and managers) is a function of the prison service training organisation which currently provides courses at the Prison Service College at Wakefield.

RMU recommends that a minimum of six trained officers be available in each establishment. To achieve and sustain this means that fresh officers need to be trained each year. The training programme has therefore been expanded from three to at least 13 courses per annum with a view to training over 200 prison officers each year.

Training for managers is a critical part of the scheme. Unless the group and intermediate managers have an understanding of the activity and its role within the establishment, much impetus and direction can be lost. It is planned to hold at least two managers' courses per year, each of three days' duration, at the Prison Service College. Call-up arrangements are similar to those for officers, i.e. through regional offices.

Appendix 1: MODEL JOB DESCRIPTION

INTERMEDIATE MANAGER

Accountable for the promotion and development of the prison officer-led pre-release and development training course in accordance with the principles of best course practice and the managers' manual, ensuring:

- attendance of self and other course managers at the Prison Service College Managers' Course;
- that sufficient trained staff, essential equipment, suitable funds and accommodation are available,
- that the course is fully integrated into the regime and management structures, with the involvement of appropriate departments and outside agencies.

GROUP LINE MANAGER

Accountable to intermediate manager for:

- provision of officer tutors and hours.

OFFICER TUTORS

Accountable to the intermediate manager for the organisation of the course including:

- selection of inmates (and advice on the selection system)
- course content

- liaison with other departments and outside agencies
- care of accommodation
- preparation of budget bid
- expenditure of budget
- maintenance of equipment
- advice on the policy, planning and future development of training.

SUGGESTED ROLES IN INTEGRATED COURSES

In the light of experience RMU have found a typical successful officer-led course to mean that officers:

- draw up course programmes in consultation;
- plan, introduce, spend more than 50 per cent of their time with, and review each course;
- lead sessions on communications and relationships. (Where possible, officers will train reliefs to work with them on these demanding, time-consuming and crucial packages.);
- will be accountable to the line managers for expenditure, maintenance of equipment, promotion of courses and the collection and distribution of evaluation;
- will be accountable for advice on the selection of inmates and referral as necessary for specialist counselling outside the course.

While it is not possible to be specific about the role of other specialists it is common to find that, where they do not lead the courses, education departments are:

- consulted in drawing up programmes;
- closely consulted on programme scheduling;
- playing appropriate roles in the presentation of sessions, particularly those which concern the development of written skills, use of information technology and development of awareness of further education benefits;

- marshalling additional resources, including any from the local education and library services;

- involved in further development of course officers' tutorial skills.

Whilst probation departments are:

- playing important roles in sessions concerned with family relationships;

- marshalling any additional and necessary resources including those from the local probation and social services.

The support of psychologists in almost all aspects of this training proves invaluable.

Appendix 2: ESSENTIAL EQUIPMENT

20 inch colour TV	Camera tripod
VHS video camera (Camcorder)	Slide projector
Whiteboard and cleaning set	50 sheets of acetate
Overhead projector	Lumocolour pens
Video tapes (6)	Dry markers

IMPLICATIONS AND OPPORTUNITIES OF THE EDUCATION REFORM ACT FOR PRISON EDUCATION

Paul Ripley
Staff Tutor
Further Education Staff College

The 1988 Education Act alters significantly the managerial structures in further and higher education and schools, and the relationships between local education authorities, the Department of Education and Science (DES), schools, colleges and polytechnics. It gives the DES a greater executive role than it previously had. It has radically broken with conventions in further education which have grown up over the last 40 years.

RESPONSIBILITIES UNDER THE ACT

Certain responsibilities have been placed on local education authorities and colleges.

- Revised Instruments and Articles of Government for colleges of further education have been introduced and new boards of governors have generally been established at the same time.

- LEAs have to prepare a scheme to submit to the Secretary of State for Education, outlining the principles and procedures they will use to plan the provision of non-advanced further education and to determine the annual budgets of their colleges.

— College governors will have responsibility for the management of the total college budget, within the framework of an annual contract with the local education authority, for the provision of specified educational services in 'programme areas'.

In brief, under the terms of the Act, each college is required to:

— prepare, for the LEA, annual proposals outlining the number of full-time equivalent students the college wishes to accommodate in each of its major programme areas;

— accept, after consultation with the LEA, an annual contract defining both the number of student FTEs to be enrolled in each area and the unit of resource to be provided for FTEs to fund the college's programme;

— monitor and evaluate its annual programme and report to the LEA on the effectiveness and efficiency of its educational services.

In turn, college governors have delegated powers to enable them to:

— exercise full and direct financial, managerial and administrative control, within the framework of the annual agreement with the LEA, over all college activities and the maintenance of premises, services and supplies;

— vire funds between heads of expenditure;

— carry surpluses forward from one financial year to another;

— determine the numbers, and grades, of appointment of new members of staff;

— undertake commercial activities, retaining all profits, including the establishment of companies limited by guarantee.

IMPLICATIONS

The major implications are as follows.

— LEAs have to plan on a strategic basis, obtaining the Secretary of State's approval for the over-all development of further education in the authority.

— Colleges will be almost entirely responsible for their own operations, subject to meeting the requirements of the local education authority's strategic plan.

— Colleges will probably alter their structures to ensure that they have the necessary managerial structures in place to meet the requirements of their new responsibilities under the Act.

PRISON EDUCATION AND THE ACT

The Act does not alter the statutory responsibilities of the Home Secretary to provide for prisoners' education. It does not alter the permissive arrangements which allow LEAs to accept responsibility, under invitation from the Home Office, to provide educational services in prisons. The LEA involvement in prison education is not a statutory legal duty — it is under invitation and around that invitation certain customs and practices have evolved.

LEAs, THE ACT AND PRISON EDUCATION

The Education Reform Act outlines certain curriculum areas to which local education authorities should pay particular attention in drawing up their strategic plans. These areas of work are:

— provision for those with special educational needs

— non-vocational adult education offered in colleges

— pre-vocational education

— special provision for unemployed people

— remedial literacy, numeracy and second language provision

— provision organised by colleges in prisons.

Several of these categories cover the type of curriculum needed to support prisoners wishing to avail themselves of educational facilities while undergoing sentence. Local education authorities have, therefore, a duty to ensure that under the best strategic plan, these areas of curriculum are given the type of resourcing and support required.

PRISON EDUCATION ORGANISED BY COLLEGES

The major effect of the 1988 Act upon the prison education department will be the relationship between its staff and the college governors. The governing body of the college is responsible for the selection of all college staff. They act in an independent and autonomous fashion in the appointment of staff to the authority. The authority, as such, no longer has a definitive say in any college appointment except for principals and chief administrative officers. College governors acting as employers have to make arrangements, either of a formal or informal nature, with the governor of the prison for which they have responsibility for the education staff. College governors should ensure that appointments and professional supervision of staff within the prison education department follow equitably agreed procedures between the prison governor and the college governors.

The Chief Education Officers Branch (CEOB) of the prison service is currently defining the relationship and nature of contracts which will exist between the prison service and the LEAs. In terms of the 1988 Reform Act, these will ensure that:

- governing bodies of colleges which have delegated powers under the Act will be responsible for the selection of staff, and the LEA (as the employer) will make the appointment to the staff of the college;

- in LEAs where prison education staff are not contracted to a college with delegated powers, e.g. when they are directly managed by LEA officers or advisers, procedures for recruitment and selection of staff will be unaffected by the 1988 Act.

CEOB is currently preparing guidelines for the recruitment and selection of education staff in prison service establishments, to ensure that prison education departments staff have a common link in procedures with those of college or LEA staff.

Such areas as disciplinary matters, grievance procedures, measurements of competence, attendance and absences, redundancies and in fact all the areas which the LEA, in consultation with the Home Office, was formerly responsible for, are now the responsibility of college governing bodies. College principals, together with prison education officers and governors, should prepare and submit to the Education Services Consultative Committee, proposals for ensuring that the college and the institution have an agreed set of procedures which take into account, not only local authority model grievance procedures (which most colleges will initially use), but also the very special nature and powers of the prison governor in determining disciplinary matters within the institution.

PRISON EDUCATION DEPARTMENTS NOT LINKED TO COLLEGES

There will be no immediate change in the conditions of service of staff employed in those institutions where there is as yet no formal link to a college. The local education authority will continue to act as employer and will be responsible for the conditions of service and the terms of reference under which staff in prison education departments work. Existing procedures agreed either formally or informally between the governor of the institution and the LEA will remain in force.

CONCLUSION

The Education Reform Act should not have any large scale or immediate effect on the day to day administration of staff in prison education departments. It may be seen rather as an instrument which highlights curriculum areas to which education officers should address themselves. Its main purpose is to give colleges the means to become more efficient in managing their own resources and responding to society's needs. The performance indicators used by prison education departments are similar to, but not the same as, LEA indicators. Consequently, since the prison education department is responsible for its resource management to the Home Office through the governor, the responsibility to manage resources is not being passed to prison education staff through the Education Reform Act. In the context of penal education it is an Act to be followed in the spirit rather than the word.

The most pertinent feature of the Act in relation to prisons is that prison education staff need to be aware of changes in the management of further education. These will affect them as strategic plans are developed and colleges change their management style and curriculum offered.

If colleagues working in prisons are to maintain a position of equity with colleagues in mainstream further education, it is important that they understand the Act. Its application to prison education may be limited but its effects on further education in mainstream colleges need also to be understood.

THE MANAGEMENT OF STRESS

Anna Stiling
Principal Education Officer
Home Office Prison Service
Headquarters

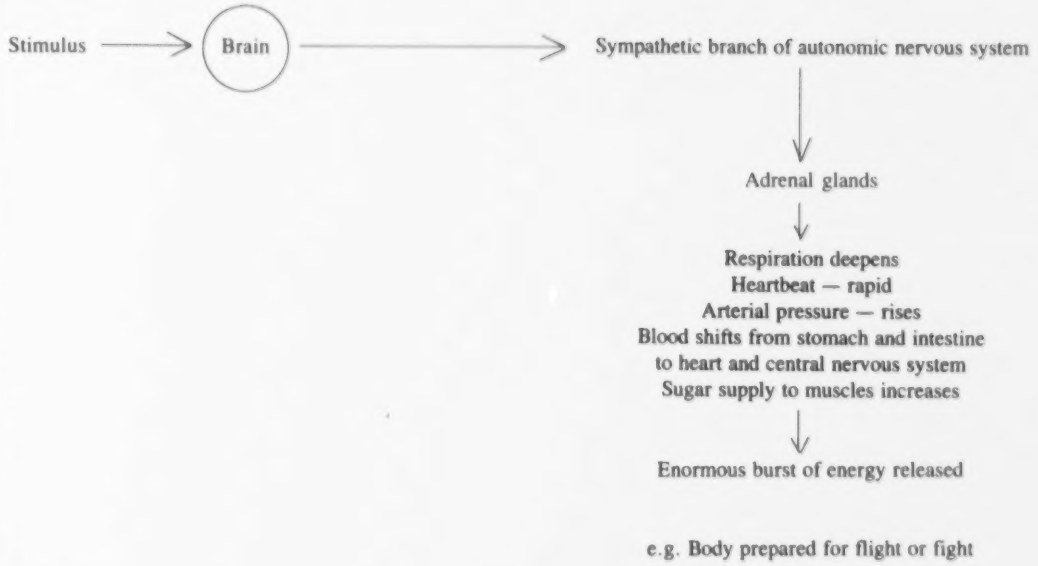
Stress is an essential, positive and normal part of our physiological and psychological makeup. It allows us to interact with our environment by responding to the stimulus of each moment in an appropriate manner. Most of the time we do not even notice stress because we have learned to cope with it in various ways.

Coping with stress appropriately is something we have learned from childhood; coping behaviour can be expressed as that which is purposive, controlled and designed to reduce threat and increase our personal comfort within any situation.

Normal behaviour can be seen as a continuum of adjustment ranging from positive, highly adapted behaviour, through to negative, helpless, self-defeating behaviour which can become neurotic and, at worst, psychotic. Where we lie on that continuum of adjustment at any particular time depends on our level of stress and the way in which we cope or adapt to it.

The physiological causes of stress can be best expressed diagrammatically (see **Figure 5**). The hereditary ability of the brain to prepare the human animal for flight or fight is still very much with us in our so-called civilised world. The physical attributes of stress prepare us by an enormous short-term burst of energy to face the aggressor or to run away. Whenever a stressful situation occurs this syndrome automatically follows. In a permanently stressful environment the level of energy required to cope with

Figure 5


Stimulus
Brain
Sympathetic branch of autonomic nervous system
Adrenal glands
Respiration deepens
Heartbeat — rapid
Arterial pressure — rises
Blood shifts from stomach and intestine
to heart and central nervous system
Sugar supply to muscles increases
Enormous burst of energy released
e.g. Body prepared for flight or fight

the conditions of modern life places people under stress for long periods of time. This can lead to both physical and emotional tension conditions, e.g. ulcers, high blood pressure, skin and respiratory disorders, allergic asthma, and can give rise to feelings of anxiety, helplessness and panic. Sufferers from this level of stress may find they cannot make decisions or concentrate, that they suffer from sleeplessness, feelings of dizziness, nausea, vague aches and pains and their behaviour may be affected — such as loss or gain of appetite, nervous restlessness and emotional instability.

Faulty thinking may well reduce coping behaviour, e.g. the need for affection, perfection, a sense of fatalism and the attempt to avoid the situation or become dependent on others. These will all increase the sense of helplessness and panic.

What in particular leads to this level of stress and anxiety? Conflict, if unresolved, leads rapidly to anxiety, tension and a sense of helplessness. Approach/avoidance conflicts are the most difficult to resolve, e.g. independence versus dependence and co-operation versus competition are very prevalent in prison education officers' working situations. Failure to find workable compromises in these areas will automatically lead to high levels of stress. While the well adjusted person may attack the problem in a realistic manner — accepting their own shortcomings, the shortcomings of others and facing inevitable situations — the poorly adjusted individual will find defence mechanisms or retreat from the situation, leaving it unresolved.

Three areas of life lead in particular to stress. These come under the headings of change, loss and injury (mental or physical). In the prison environment all three of these particularly grave stresses are constantly with us, especially in the student population but also within the teaching environment itself among relationships with staff. This is particularly so for those who are unused to working in a closed environment. There is no doubt that stress and tension are contagious. High levels of loss, change and injury suffered by students will affect those who teach them. Detachment is difficult and within this atmosphere relationships may become strained or inappropriate.

Another major cause of stress is a sense of helplessness (loss of autonomy, control, status, self-respect, etc.). As managers, we need to recognise these dangers within the working environment and to attempt to create a safe, calm, relaxed atmosphere. Relaxation is the opposite of tension — though

there is always the alternative danger of apathy! Within any learning environment there is bound to be a certain sense of tension. Up to a point this is valuable, aiding concentration and creating a sense of urgency without which examinations could not take place. Although a modicum of stress is vital, too much stress will become disabling and learning will be impaired.

Stress management is now being taken seriously within the world of industry where 40,000,000 working hours are lost each year through stress-related illness. It is not something which will go away and needs to be addressed within staff development, arrangements for leave, classroom environment, relationships within education departments and within the institution as a whole. Classes on stress management and coping with loss and change are now frequently within the staff development areas of colleges and LEAs. Bailey (1989) has produced a package of training material which is useful in this area. It is hoped that education managers will take advantage of such training opportunities, both for themselves and for their teaching staff. The first step, however, is to recognise that stress exists, that it must be coped with and that every effort should be made to encourage others to cope adequately.

REFERENCE

Bailey, Roy (1989) **Fifty activities for managing stress.** Gower

DEVELOPMENT OF NATIONAL VOCATIONAL QUALIFICATIONS IN THE PRISON SERVICE

Neil Tattersall
Regional Development Officer for NVQ (South West)
Home Office Prison Service

Head Office policy is to promote the development of National Vocational Qualifications (NVQs) in prisons. NVQ is a standing item on the Prisons Board agenda.

Four Regional Development Officers (RDOs) have been appointed, one for each region. They are:

Bill Case — North
Angela Town — South East
David Poole — Midlands
Neil Tattersall — South West

We have each been seconded out of our respective institutions for two years, which again reflects the seriousness with which the Head Office views NVQ. Our remit is wider than just education — it covers all inmates and staff in an institution.

BACKGROUND TO NCVQ

The origins of the National Council for Vocational Qualifications (NCVQ) lie in the 1985 White Paper **Education and training for young people** which suggested a review of vocational qualifications.

The review group, which was set up as a result of the White Paper, recommended the establishment of the NCVQ and it began work in October 1986. Its target is to place vocational qualifications for all the main occupational sectors within a new framework by December 1991. The aims of NCVQ are two-fold;

1 to improve vocational qualifications by basing them on the standards of competence required in employment;

2 to establish an NVQ framework which is comprehensible and comprehensive and to facilitate access, progression and continued learning.

Definitions

An NVQ is 'a statement of competence clearly relevant to work and intended to facilitate entry into, or progression in, employment and further learning, issued to an individual by a recognised awarding body'.

A **statement of competence** comprises a **title**, a number of **units of competence**, and a number of **elements of competence**, with their associated **performance criteria** that collectively make up a unit.

The **units** themselves can be separately assessed and credited. This will allow credits to be accumulated over varying periods, in different locations, and through different modes of learning. This illustrates a basic philosophy of NVQs — they require that access to qualifications is open to anyone able to demonstrate competence. This is facilitated by NVQs being independent of any specific course, programme or mode of learning. NVQs also promote access through the elimination of barriers such as age limits and minimum training time requirements. Equal opportunities are positively promoted. The term 'unit' rather than 'module' is used to avoid the perception of time limits.

NCVQ'S TASKS

The government has set the council nine specific tasks:

1 to secure **standards** of occupational competence and to ensure that vocational qualifications are based upon them;

2 to design and implement a new national **framework** for vocational qualifications;

3 to approve bodies making **accredited** awards;

4 to obtain comprehensive **coverage** of an occupational sector;

5 to secure arrangements for **quality assurance**;

6 to set up effective **liaison** with bodies awarding vocational qualifications;

7 to establish a national **database** for vocational qualifications;

8 to undertake, or arrange to be undertaken, **research** and development to discharge these functions;

9 to **promote** vocational education, training and qualifications.

Standards

NVQs will be accorded by the NCVQ to vocational qualifications accredited by the Council, and awarded by bodies approved by the Council (either singly or jointly). The Council does not, therefore, award qualifications *per se*, but accredits/recognises/kitemarks qualifications awarded by bodies such as the Business and Technician Education Council (BTEC).

NCVQ has set out the criteria which qualifications must meet to be accredited as NVQs. As already stated, an NVQ must embody a 'statement of competence' which has to be achieved to given standards before a candidate can receive an award. This statement must be **employment-led** in that it should reflect what is required for successful performance in industry. The term 'employment-led' indicates that employers and others (employees, unions etc.) will provide the 'statement of competence'.

Some industries have already set out major parts of their training needs in terms of occupational competence, for example, through a statutory training board like EITB. In these cases, awarding bodies may be, and are, using 'employment-led' competencies within their qualifications.

Where there are no agreed standards of competence, the Training Agency's (TA) Occupational Standards Branch (OSB) is assisting industry to devise them through Lead Industry Bodies established for this purpose.

In the past employers have complained that standards have not been high enough and that the skills learnt have been inappropriate to the needs of industry. Now it is up to the employers to specify the areas of competence and the standards they require.

Framework

The aim of the framework is to bring all vocational qualifications into a national system in order to make it more comprehensible, and to aid progression by clearly showing the routes available to those seeking qualifications. The objectives of the framework are:

- to rationalise and update the system of qualifications;
- to enable industry (together with the TA) to set the standards of qualifications it needs (working with the TA);
- to provide clearer paths for progression from one qualification to another;
- to open access to qualifications and promote education and training.

A five-level framework has been proposed. The levels are Basic, Ordinary, Advanced, Higher and Professional.

Level 1 Basic level has no prior requirements. Qualifications at this level are for **entry** into employment. They will typically indicate the ability to perform a minimum number of work-related activities within realistic time constraints to specified standards necessary for employment in an occupation or limited group of occupations. NVQs at this level will be more broadly based than those higher up to accommodate those candidates who are unsure of their future occupation.

Level 2 Ordinary standard Qualifications at Ordinary standard will be awarded for competence needed for many occupations which are primarily of a routine and regular character.

Level 3 Advanced standard Qualifications at this level will be awarded for competencies needed for occupations which are not of a routine character, and which may require application in a variety of contexts and roles.

Level 4 Higher standard Qualifications at this level will be awarded for competencies needed for occupations with specialist, supervisory or professional requirements which need the capacity to adapt to a major role change whilst maintaining full accountability and responsibility for personal outputs and those of others.

Level 5 Professional standard The present remit of NCVQ only extends to Level 4. Consultations regarding Level 5 are in progress. The first two levels are relevant as far as **prisons** are concerned . Level 1, in particular, should allow inmates to obtain work-related qualifications in a shorter time scale and at a lower level of competence than was previously possible. Levels 3 and 4 are likely to require supervisory and even managerial competencies. It would obviously be very difficult to provide these in the prison context.

NATIONAL RECORD OF VOCATIONAL ACHIEVEMENT (NROVA)

NCVQ has introduced the NROVA through which a national system of credit accumulation and transfer will operate. The NROVA provides a common system of recording units — credits towards qualifications of different awarding bodies, in different locations and over varying periods of time. The NROVA has two main parts. **Part 1** has an **Action Plan** — the units needed for a particular qualification — and an **Assessment Record** of progress towards these units. **Part 2** is for the certificates obtained by individual

- NVQ units
- units achieved in other vocational qualifications
- units achieved in national programmes.

THE ROLE OF THE REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT OFFICERS FOR NVQ

The current state of play in the development of NVQs is patchy. This, combined with the fact that differing establishments and differing activity

areas all have varying degrees of constraints, prevents the implementation of a centrally devised policy. The RDO's primary task will be to support initiatives at establishment level and to focus on implications for the work of education departments. The job description is specifically:

- to provide information on developments across the range of NCVQ activities;
- to assess the implications of NVQs and to advise PEOs, Governors and EOs of desirable developments in education departments;
- to encourage, support and develop initiatives at establishment and regional levels;
- to secure staff development and training through liaison with national bodies such as RACs, LEAs, colleges and other training providers;
- through the regionally based PEO to advise the RDO on regional implications and developments;
- through the regionally based PEO to report to the CEO on wider implications and developments so that he or she can inform the Director of Services and consult with other heads of divisions and branches.

A STRATEGY FOR INTRODUCING NVQs INTO ESTABLISHMENTS

The RDOs plan to visit a number of establishments. The aims of our visits are:

- to raise awareness;
- to obtain a current audit of activities in the institution;
- to discuss possible initiatives. There will be an analysis of the current ability of the institution to meet the requirements of NVQs.

We plan to initiate and develop an NVQ database which will show both the current position of activities in establishments and the current position regarding the development of NVQs in different occupational areas. There is an obvious need for this database to be updated constantly.

Pilot NVQ developments will depend upon a number of factors, for example:

- type of institution — it is obviously easier in trainers and YOIs than locals but some development can take place in locals;
- the current situation regarding NVQ developments in the specific occupational sectors;
- the attitude of relevant staff both senior management and trainers.

Pilots will obviously be very closely scrutinised and therefore need to work effectively.

Concurrent with pilot initiatives, there is a need to analyse and satisfy training needs. Staff development is a process rather than an event. Specific needs will vary from person to person. All staff will require information. Senior management's training needs should focus on making provision. Practitioners' training should focus on, for example:

- providing individualised learning programmes which emphasise negotiation, guidance, continuous assessment and flexibility of delivery;
- developing methods of assessing competencies;
- being conversant with the various ways of recording achievement, including record keeping. It is important in this respect to distinguish between;
    a) recording demonstrated competencies, which is usually done on an examining board's pro forma;
    b) recording progress towards competencies where one has to design one's own form.

DES Circular 5/88 for the financial year 1990/91 includes a new priority area — NP 17: 'to support training to develop teaching and assessment (including workplace assessment) of competence-based qualifications and elements of competence in FE'.

RDOs can only facilitate. The success of introducing NVQs within an establishment is dependent upon commitment at the highest level. It is essential that the senior management team are involved from the start and that they are familiar with NVQs and have planned their introduction by, for example:

- taking initiatives,
- ensuring awareness raising,
- assessing staffing implications,
- examining implied training needs and planning for them,
- setting time scales and objectives, and
- reviewing and evaluating progress.

Once an area has been identified for piloting, a team will need to plan the way ahead. One member of the SMT will need to act as co-ordinator within the institution.

ACCREDITATION OF PRIOR LEARNING

It is now commonly recognised that people learn and achieve levels of competence outside the framework of college courses and traditional learning modes. There are, however, few means of recognising and certificating these achievements. One major step forward, simultaneous with the developments of NVQs, is the accreditation of prior learning (APL). APL could become very important in the prison context. Many of our clients have unrecognised competencies; our aim in induction interviews is to tease them out.

A TA/NCVQ feasibility project on APL is addressing the key question: Is it feasible to use evidence of APL and experiential learning to recognise current competencies?

Those of us in the prison education service need to address a number of questions about APL.

- How long is a certificate in a competence area applicable, e.g. computer technology — one year/five years?

- How costly is it in terms of time? Should we prepare inmates for accreditation once they are released?

- What are the staff development implications? What training is required for counselling/interviewing?

- Is the institution able to offer unit-based assessment and flexible learning opportunities? A logical conclusion to APL is the fact that each client will have a different background and different requirements.

- How credible is APL in the eyes of the examining and validating boards?

- How is APL moderated in order to get consistency of approach?

- How authentic is the work presented by a client for accreditation?

- What is the minimum amount of accreditation that can be given for prior learning? The project suggests 50 per cent; if a client obtains less that 50 per cent of the credits towards a qualification via APL, it is probably better for that person to start from scratch.

APL needs to be viewed as accreditation rather than exemption because accreditation is perceived to be positive — obtaining something that will lead to something else. Exemption is negative — one need not do something in order ultimately to obtain a certificate.

IMPLICATIONS

No money has been made specifically available for NVQ developments. Because of the PES cycle there will be no properly costed estimate until the 1990 PES bid to the Treasury and therefore no specific money will be available until April 1991. Costs will include registration, staff

development, administration, material (e.g. passbooks), certification, assessment, (especially in the workplace, up to £80 per person), NCVQ charges and NROVA.

Education officers' roles are likely to increase as exam administrators and as providers of money, at least initially, from their revenue budget for materials. They are likely to be involved as sentence planners and as counsellors. Education officers may have to reorientate themselves to suit the training requirements in the rest of the institution. Education departments should provide an integrated and vocationally complementary curriculum.

The establishment may be affected in that work rosters might need adjustment to accommodate changing roles. Allocation procedures to work parties may have to be changed to improve selection of inmates for suitable courses.

The implications of NCVQ for inmates should be greater involvement in the learning process and a resulting gain in confidence and self-esteem.

There are a number of questions we should ask in view of the fact that there are limited resources for these developments.

1 Should we certificate in occupational areas such as agriculture when the majority of inmates will go back to cities? Or in tailoring, when most of the jobs outside are for women?

2 Should we concentrate on YCIs to parallel what is happening on the outside, namely the TA's emphasis on YTS rather than ET?

3 Should inmates show their commitment to training and pay some or all of the fees?

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ACRONYMS AND INITIALISMS USED IN THIS REPORT

AG	Assistant Governor
ALBSU	Adult Literacy and Basic Skills Unit
AO	Administrative Officer
APL	Accreditation of Prior Learning
BTEC	Business and Technician Education Council
CEO	Chief Education Officer
CEOB	Chief Education Officers Branch
CI	Circular Instruction
DES	Department of Education and Science
EITB	Engineering Industry Training Board
EO	Education Officer
ET	Employment Training
F&G	Farms & Gardens
FTE	Full Time Equivalent
HMP	Her Majesty's Prison
IM	Industrial Manager
IT	Information Technology
LEA	Local Education Authority
MS	Management Services
NATFHE	National Association of Teachers in Further and Higher Education
NCVQ	National Council of Vocational Qualifications
NJC	National Joint Council
NROVA	National Record of Vocational Achievement
NVQ	National Vocational Qualifications
OSB	Occupational Standards Branch (of TA)
PEO	Principal Education Officer
PES	Public Expenditure Survey

PO	Principal Officer
RAC	Regional Advisory Council
RDO	Regional Development Officer
RMU	Regimes Management Unit
SMO	Senior Medical Officer
SMT	Senior Management Team
SPAR	Staff Planning and Reporting (System)
SPO	Senior Probation Officer
TA	Training Agency
YOI	Youth Offenders Institution
YTS	Youth Training Scheme

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